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DEFENCE

R

OF

LECTURERS.

Instituenda sunt Lectiones quotidiana; Altera Mane, in Novo, vel Veteri Testamento; Altera Vesper, in Altero Testamento, cum Explanacione Vernacula. Hunc Ritum esse Antiquum, probat & Res, & Vocabulum. Luth. in Præf. ad Form. Miss. pro Ecc. Wittemb. Tom. II.



L O N D O N,

Printed for W. MEARS, at the *Lamb* without
Temple-Bar. MDCCXXI.

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P R E F A C E.



Dispute having lately happen'd in a Public Company about the USEFULNESS of LECTURERS, and one of the Gentlemen sending me the following Letter a few Days after, occasion'd the Writing of this Treatise in Answer to it: And the Reason why it is Printed, is in Hopes it may do some good to the Cause of Religion in General, by taking off the unjust Prejudices which many have conceiv'd against the Frequency of our Preaching; and to the Cause of the Church of England in Particular, as a short Apology for Her Clergy and Charity-Schools.

I trust I have treated His Grace of CANTERBURY with the Deference due to His high Station, Character and Abilities; and said Nothing which can justly disoblige any Person.

PREFACE.

IF I have said more of my Brethren than some may like, let 'em consider the Necessity there is for saying it, in these Days of Wickedness, when so many Mercenary Pens are drawn against Them, sharpen'd by Hunger and Malice, and 'tis Fashionable to endeavour to make them the Filth of the World, and the Offscouring of all Things; tho' the Blood of our Best Nobility fills some of their Veins, the Blood of our Chief Gentry many of 'em, and a Liberal Education adorns 'em All.

I have regarded no Ornaments or Embellishments, but left naked Truth to shift for it self. I foresee the Quotations will pass over heavily; but sure Men are not always to Read for Pleasure, and Subjects must be taken as they can be handled, not as we would wish 'em to be. And now I offer up my Hearty Prayers to God, that what is here Publish'd may answer the Ends of its Publication.





A
D E F E N C E
O F
L E C T U R E R S

March, 1721.

REVEREND SIR,

TO let you see I am not *Wise* in my own *Conceit*, I here send you the very Words of that Learned and Worthy Prelate, WILLIAM Lord Bishop of LINCOLN, in the Preface to his Commentary upon the *Church-Catechism*, directed to the Arch-Deacons and Clergy of that Diocese, in the Third Edition, Publish'd 1708.

“ How wise the Constitution of our Church
“ in this Respect, as well as in its other Esta-
“ blishments, is, it would be needless for me
“ to observe to you. The Reason of the Thing

“ it self sufficiently speaks it: For as by the
 “ *Sermon* in the *Morning*, those who are of
 “ *Riper Years*, and better Knowledge, in the
 “ Gospel of Christ, are edified and instructed;
 “ so by teaching, and expounding the *Catechism*,
 “ in the *Afternoon*, the Younger, and more Ig-
 “ norant, (who are not yet capable of profit-
 “ ing by Sermons) are inform’d and train’d
 “ up with such a Sort of Learning as is suitable
 “ to their Age and Capacities. And yet, alas!
 “ how has this prudent and useful Method been
 “ slighted by many, and neglected by more?
 “ And instead of these *Catachetical Instituti-*
 “ *ons*, a *Second Sermon* been introduc’d for
 “ the *Afternoon*; and a new Sort of *Teachers*
 “ set up, under as new a Character, of *Le-*
 “ *cturers*, to Preach it; and that (oftentimes)
 “ not so much to the real Benefit, as to the
 “ Fancies and Inclinations of those by whom
 “ they are to be paid for it. I cannot say that
 “ this is altogether contrary to our *present Esta-*
 “ *blishment*, because the last * *Act of Unifor-*
 “ *mity* has given Directions for the licensing,
 “ and allowing of them: But sure I am it is a
 “ manifest Encroachment upon our good *Old*
 “ *Constitution*, which knew no such Persons,
 “ nor made any Provision for them. And the
 “ Result has been, that the *Afternoon Sermon*
 “ has almost quite thrown out the much better,
 “ and

* 13 CAR. II. C. iv. S. 19, &c.

of LECTURERS. 5

“ and more profitable Exercise of *Catechizing* ;
 “ which has both the *Laws* of the *Realm*, and
 “ *Canons* of the *Church*, on its Side; whereas
 “ the other has neither: And therefore if the
 “ *One* must be allow’d, I think the *Other*, at
 “ least, should not be omitted.

“ AND in this I speak not only my own
 “ Sense, but the Judgment of those whose
 “ Opinions carry Authority, as well as Weight,
 “ with them. Such was that of *Arch-bishop
 “ *Sheldon*, in the Year 1672, who by the King’s
 “ Command requir’d his Suffragans “ *To enforce*
 “ *the Execution of such Laws and Constituti-*
 “ *ons, as enabled them to enjoyn the Use, and*
 “ *Excercise, of our Church-Catechism: Of †*
 “ Arch-bishop *Sancroft*, in the Year 1688,
 “ among whose seasonable and wise *Articles*,
 “ sent to his *Bishops* in a very *Critical Jun-*
 “ *cture*, the Fourth was this: ---- *That*
 “ *they (the Clergy) diligently Catechize the*
 “ *Children, and Youth of their Parishes, (as*
 “ *the Rubric of the Common - Prayer - Book,*
 “ *and the Fifty-Ninth Canon enjoyn) and so*
 “ *prepare them to be brought in due Time to*
 “ *Confirmation, when there shall be Opportu-*
 “ *nity: And that they also, at the same Time,*
 “ *expound the Grounds of Religion, and Com-*
 “ *mon Christianity, in the Method of the Cate-*
 “ *chism;*

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* See his Letter of that Year to the Bishop of LONDON.

† See his Articles recommended to the Bishops, July 16. 1688.

“ chism, for the Instruction and Benefit of the
 “ whole Parish; teaching them what they are
 “ to Believe, and what to Do, and what
 “ to Pray for; and particularly, often and
 “ earnestly inculcating upon them the Im-
 “ portance, and Obligation of their Baptismal
 “ Vows.

“ THIS was what that great, and good *Prelate*,
 “ thought necessary to recommend to the *Clergy*
 “ in the Time of our utmost Danger, and as the
 “ best Means to prevent the Growth of *Pope-*
 “ *ry*, then breaking in, like a Torrent upon us,
 “ on every Side. And when his late Majesty,
 “ of Glorious Memory, had freed us from that
 “ Fear, yet still He thought this Duty of so
 “ much Importance, as to give it a particular
 “ Place in his * *Injunctions*, set forth for the
 “ better Establishment of our *Church* in the
 “ Year 1694.

YOUR *Answer* to this, Sir, and what was
 farther urg'd against *Lecturers*, when we were
 lately together, will very much oblige,

SIR,

Your Humble Servant,

W. B.

* *Injunctions*, A. D. 1694, N. 14.

I thank



JULY, 1721.

I Thank my *Good Friend* for this Letter; but can't think *He* is any more concern'd in the Application of the *Text* he hints at, than *my self*, or any *other* Person in Company, when I spoke it: For 'twas not directed particularly to *Him*, but brought in as an Observation upon *us All*, when the Argument was over: And I take this Opportunity to assure him, that I never yet designedly call'd His *Wisdom* in Question, or accus'd Him of *Conceitedness*.

THE *Quotation* you make, *Sir*, is very much to the Purpose, considering how the *Dispute* ran: But, before I come to examin it, I beg you will indulge my taking a short View of the whole *Preface* you have borrow'd it from, so far as it relates to the Point in Hand.

HIS Lordship observes, in the Former Part of this *Preface*, " That the * *Lord Cromwel* began the *Reformation*, with requiring Ministers to teach *Parents* and *Masters*, and, by them, their *Children* and *Servants*, the *Creed*, the *Lord's Prayer*, and the *Ten Command-*

B 4

" *ments*;

* See his Injunct. 1536. Regr. Cran. F. 97, & 99.

" *ments*; which was more than many of the
 " *Clergy* themselves, in those Days, were very
 " well able to expound to them. " [So that Ca-
 techizing was not in Fashion 184 Years ago.]
 " About Eleven Years after, (His Lordship tells
 " us) † King *Edward* the *Sixth* found it ne-
 " cessary to repeat the very same Order in His
 " *Injunctions*: That every *Holy-Day*, when there
 " was no *Sermon*, the *Parsons* and *Vicars* should,
 " after the *Gospel*, recite to their Parishioners,
 " the *Pater-Noster*, *Creed*, and *Ten Command-*
 " *ments* in *English*, to the Intent the People
 " might learn the same; exhorting all Parents
 " and Householders to teach their Children and
 " Servants the same. [Which shews Catechi-
 zing was not observ'd, and postpon'd to Sermons,
 173 Years since.] " When the Service - Book
 " was *compil'd* about *Two Years* after, a *Cate-*
 " *chism* was inserted into it; and the * *Curate*.
 " enjoyn'd, every Sixth Week, at the least, to
 " teach and declare the *Catechism*, according
 " to the *Book* of the same. But yet still this
 " Work continued in the same State; nor was
 " any Thing more done in it by *Public Autho-*
 " *rity*, 'till about Four Years after; when,
 " together with the *Articles of Religion*, ano-
 " ther *Catechism* was compos'd, and publish'd
 " in *Latin*, and all *School-Masters* enjoyn'd
 " by the King's Command to instruct their
 " *Scholars*.

† K. EDWARD VI. Injunct. 1547. * Bp. BURNET's Hist.
 of the Reform. Vol. II. Ap. p. 165.

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“ *Scholars* in it. And here the compleat Model of our *Church-Catechism* was first laid, “ a short Account of the Two *Sacraments* being added to the *Creed*, *Lord's Prayer*, and “ *Ten Commandments*. ” [This was done 167 Years past] “ A Stop was put to this Exercise in “ Queen *Mary's* Reign--- But when † Queen “ *Elizabeth* came to the Throne, she return'd “ to the same Order that Her Brother, King *Edward* the VI. had establish'd. She requir'd “ the *Parsons* and *Vicars*, every *Holy-Day*, to “ recite the *Creed*, the *Lord's Prayer*, and *Ten* “ *Commandments* in *English*, that their *Parishioners* might both learn themselves, and “ teach their *Children* the same. And she enjoyn'd them every *Holy-Day*, and every *Second Sunday* in the Year, to hear and instruct the *Youth* of their *Parish*, for Half an Hour at least, before *Evening-Prayer*, in these “ *Three Points*; and diligently to examin them, “ and teach them the *Catechism* set forth in “ the *Book of Public Prayer*. ” [This was 161 Years ago. And, what Obstruction could *Lecturers* have been hitherto to *Catechizing*? Or, how much *Older* is our *Constitution*, in *This* Respect, than 'tis in *That* of *Lecturers*? And how ignorant were, not only *Children*, but *Parents* and *Masters*, even of the *Creed*, *Lord's Prayer*, and *Ten Commandments*, 'till *Lecturers* enlighten'd 'em?]

† 1559. Q. ELIZ. In. N. 5. 44.

“ By the * *Constitutions* of 1571, [only
 151 Years since] His Lordship informs us, “ That
 “ every Rector and Vicar was oblig’d, upon
 “ every *Sunday*, and *Holy-Day*, to spend Two
 “ Hours after Dinner in this Work -- [But, what
 is This to *Lecturers*, and *Afternoon Sermons*?
 The *Rectors* and *Vicars* may do so now, if they
 please.] “ This was re-inforc’d in the *Synod* of
 “ 1575, [147 Years ago,] and confirm’d, as the
 “ other before had been, by the *Queen’s Au-*
 “ *thority*: And when Arch-Bishop *Whitgift*
 “ understood that this profitable Exercise began,
 “ nevertheless, to be too much neglected both
 “ by the *Ministers*, and *People*; he earnestly re-
 “ quir’d his *Suffragans* to give straight Charge
 “ to Both; and to see that the *Children*, and
 “ other *Ignorant Persons*, were duly instructed
 “ and examin’d in their *Catechism*, as by the
 “ *Orders* of the *Church* they ought to be. [So
 that even only 129 Years past, *Catechizing* was
 hardly observ’d, and does not appear to be en-
 joyn’d by any *Act of Parliament*.]

† “ THIS Matter was settled again by the
 “ *Canons* of 1604, [only 116 Years since]
 “ and severe Canonical Penalties decreed against
 “ such Ministers, upon Complaint of Neglect
 “ in This Particular. But upon the last || Revisi-
 “ on

* *Spar. Col. p. 233.*

† *Can. 59.*

1661. See the Rubric before the Church-Catechism.

“ on of the Book of *Common-Prayer*, [only
59 Years ago, when all *Lectures* were as
much in Vogue as they are now, and when *Catechizing*
was first establish'd effectually, and by
Act of Parliament,] “ There is some Change
“ made as to the *Time* when this Office is to
“ be perform'd: For whereas before the *Curate*
“ of every *Parish* was directed to instruct and
“ examine the Children of his *Parish* before
“ *Evening-Prayer* began; it is now appointed,
“ to be done in *Time of Divine Service*, im-
“ mediately after the *Second Lesson*--- But still,
“ as to the Substance of the Duty, it remains
“ as it did.

AND, if so, let the *Ministers* and *People*
answer for the *Neglect* of This Duty, where it's
neglected; the *Lecturers* being out of the Case.
'Tis certain *They* did not hinder *Catechizing*
much *Before* this *Rubrick* was made; and as
certain, that the *Enactors* of it did not think
They would hinder it for the *Future*; otherwise,
They ought either to have laid *Lecturers* aside,
or enjoin'd *Catechizing* at some *other* Hour.
From All which it appears, that the real Pra-
ctice of *Catechizing* is no *Older* a Branch of
our *Constitution*, than *Lecturers*; and that the
one was never effectually carry'd on, 'till after
the *Other* was establish'd. For *these Reasons*,
and no *Other*, I have made the foregoing *Re-*
marks; and not with the least View of depreci-
ating

ating or discouraging the excellent Institution of *Catechizing*.

AND, that *Both* these *Customs* are consistent with each other, and useful, His Lordship Himself is pleas'd to own, in the very next *Period* to the *Quotation* you have made from Him ---
 " Our Present Most Reverend *Metropolitan*, in
 " His *Circular Letter*, 1695, thus prudently re-
 " concil'd the Discharge of This Duty, with the
 " Manners and Humours of the Times; by di-
 " recting his *Suffragans* to recommend it to
 " their *Clergy*, since they must Preach, (after
 " having examin'd the *Children* in their *Cate-
 chism*, as the *Rubrick* requires,) " to Preach in
 " the *Afternoon* upon *Catechetical Heads* ;
 " both that the People may be the better root-
 " ed and grounded in the Faith, and also kept
 " from *Other Assemblies*.

I come now to your *Favourite Passage*, Sir:
 But, shall give you the late Dr. *Edwards's*
 Thoughts upon it, (tho' I think them too rough
 and unmannerly,) as express'd in the Beginning of
 his *Preacher*, before I offer my own.---" There are
 " those (says he) who would have *Catechizing*
 " exclude all *Sermons*, and accordingly they
 " so extol and advance the *One*, as to
 " bring the *Other* into Disrepute: Whereas
 " the true Way is to maintain and keep up the
 " Credit of *Both*: The *One* being necessary for
 " those of younger Years, and the *Other* for
 " such

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“ such as are of some Maturity. He goes on ---
“ I confess I wonder’d to meet with such a Pas-
“ sage as This in a * *Learned Writer* of our
“ Church: “ *I am confident, saith he, that would*
“ *all Sorts of Persons but duly attend upon*
“ *these Instructions (i.e. Catechetical Exercises*
“ *which he before mention’d) they would reap*
“ *a more substantial Benefit by them than from*
“ *those other Exercises which have, I know not*
“ *how, so universally crept into the Place of them.*
“ One would not have imagin’d that a Person of
“ His Character should venture to utter such *un-*
“ *advised Words*, for they can be thought to be
“ no less, seeing they cast such a Contempt upon
“ those Religious Exercises, *viz. Sermons*, which
“ are so constantly Preach’d not only by his
“ Brethren, but by himself, and are duly at-
“ tended upon by Understanding and Pious
“ Christians. If Sermons be *crept into* the Place
“ of *Catechizing*, it is by the Allowance of
“ the Governors of the Church, and therefore
“ this Worthy Writer could not truly say, *he*
“ *knew not how*. But if he was resolv’d to say
“ any Thing of this Matter, he might have said
“ this with Truth and Reason, that Catechizing
“ and-Pulpit-Discourses have their different Use
“ and Place, and so are consistent; and there-
“ fore ’tis unreasonable and absur’d that One
“ should juggle out the *Other*.

* Dr. Wake’s Pref. to his Commen. on the Church-Catechism.

I told you above, Sir, that your *Quotation* was very pertinent; but think it should not immediately affect the *Lecturers of this Town*: Because, when His Lordship wrote the said *Preface* to His *Arch-Deacons* and *Clergy*, he was Bishop of *Lincoln*, and gave it as Advice to the *Clergy* of that *Diocese*. And, if so, His Lordship had no great Occasion to find Fault with *Lecturers*, there being so few in that whole *County*, and in all the *Counties* under His large Episcopal Care. And as little Reason was there to discourage *Sermons* by the *Incumbents* in *Afternoons*; since so very few Churches in the Country have 'em, or indeed so much as *Prayers*. If we therefore take His Lordship, as Writing to His *Own Clergy*, one would imagine His Meaning to be, *First*, A kind Apology to the *People*, for the *Clergy's* not Preaching *twice* on Sunday's, which *most* Parishes very eagerly covet: And, *Secondly*, A modest Insinuation to the *Clergy*, that they ought to read *Prayers* and Catechize, at least, on *Sundays* in the Afternoon.

BUT, Sir, if you conceive His Lordship intended this Paragraph as a *Wipe* upon the *London-Lecturers*, as you probably do by sending it *thus* to me, I shall beg Leave to observe, that the Whole of His Lordship's *Complaints* against 'em seems to be compriz'd under *Three Heads*, which I shall endeavour to *Answer*.

AND

AND the *First* is, " That a *Second Sermon*,
 " introduc'd for the *Afternoon*, and a new Sort
 " of *Teachers* set up, under as new a Character,
 " of *Lecturers*, to Preach it, is a manifest En-
 " croachment upon our good *Old Constitution*,
 " which knew no Such Persons, nor made any
 " Provision for Them.

Secondly, " That the Result has been, that
 " the *Afternoon Sermon* has almost quite thrown
 " out the much better, and more profitable Ex-
 " ercise, of *Catechizing*; which has both the
 " *Laws* of the *Realm*, and the *Canons* of
 " the *Church*, on its Side; whereas the other has
 " neither.

AND, *Thirdly*, " That these new *Teachers*
 " and *Lecturers* Preach (oftentimes) not so much
 " to the real Benefit, as to the Fancies and Inclinations of Those by whom They are to be paid
 " for it.

WHAT His Lordship means, Sir, in His *First*
 Complaint, by our good *Old Constitution*, by in-
 veighing against an Encroachment upon it, and
 saying *Lecturers* have neither the *Laws* of the
Realm, nor the *Canons* of the *Church*, on Their
 Side, I cannot imagine; since He acknowledges, in
 the same *Section*, " That he cannot say that *Le-*
 " *cturers* are altogether contrary to our *Present E-*
 " *stablishment*, because the last * *Act of Uniformity*

* 13. Car. 11. Cap. IV. S. 19, &c.

“ has given Directions for the Licensing, and
 “ Allowing of them. Are all *new* Acts of Parliament then Encroachments upon our *Old* Constitution? Is not such an Act a Law of our Realm? If the Law of the Land obliges Bishops to Allow and License Lecturers, what better Establishment can they have, except the making a legal Provision for 'em, which 'tis their Misfortune *yet* to want? But sure their *Misfortune* ought not to be imputed to 'em as their *Crime*!

I have already shewn, Sir, and from His Lordship's own Words, that the real Practice of *Catechizing* is no *Older* a Branch of our Constitution than *Lecturers*, they being *Both* establish'd by Law together in 1660. But, tho' I date the Commencement of *Lectures* so low, yet many of 'em are much Ancienter, and *Older* than our Constitution it self in this Respect. I grant, that most of the *Lectures* in this City took their Rise in the last Century: Yet the Evening-Lecture on *Friday*, at *St. Michael-Royal*, was founded and endow'd in 1589; as were also *Three* Lecture-Sermons at *St. Michael-Cornhill* 300 Years ago, *Two* of which to be Preach'd on *Sundays* after Evening-Prayers, and the *Third* on *Christmas-Day* at the same Hour. I forbear several Other Instances, because the very First of the *Canons*, made in the First Year of the Reign of King *James I.* 1603, mentions *Lecturers* more than once; and the Learned

Dr.

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Dr. *Gibson* tells us in his *Codex*, " That this
" *Canon* is taken from the Injunctions of *Henry*
" VIII. publish'd in 1536.

So that these *New Teachers*, Sir, are not
of so Modern a Date in this Town, as perhaps
you took them to be; and, if you trace them to
the Original, they will appear to be no Younger
than *Christianity* it self. For no Employment
of the Clergy being of more general Use than
Preaching, our Saviour places it first in His Com-
mission to the Apostles, and sends 'em forth to
Preach, and not to *Pray*, as the *Ordination* of
Ministers now runs. And, as *Christ* and His
Apostles took all Opportunities of Preaching,
and gave themselves continually to the Ministry
of the Word: So St. *Chrysostom*, St. *Austin*, St.
Ambrose, St. *Origen*, St. *Basil*, and other famous
Lights of the Church, Preach'd not only *Twice*
upon the Lord's-Day, but on other Days of the
Week, and often, for many Days together, espe-
cially in *Lent*, (in Imitation of which our *Lent-*
Preachers are appointed) as appears from their
Sermons, and other Writers. They had staid Ser-
mons on *Thursdays* and *Saturdays* in the Churches
of *Alexandria*, which were set up by *Origen*. St.
Chrysostom intimates, that he Preach'd *Thrice* a
Week, defends and applauds the Custom of Preach-
ing on *Sundays* in the Afternoon as useful and
necessary, and there are many Reproofs extant
in his Afternoon Tractates and Homilies to
People for not frequenting them. Bishops then
C Preach'd

Preach'd constantly, and were enjoyn'd so to do: Nay, possibly, every Day, as well as Communicated. At first, Preaching was reserv'd as a Peculiar of the Bishops, especially in Cathedral-Churches: And so both the *Latin* and *Greek* Fathers made Comments and Sermons *Twice* every Sunday. But this Function was very early requir'd of Presbyters; and, in Cities, and greater Churches, they Preach'd Forenoon and Afternoon, and seldom an Holy-Day past without a Sermon, which Custom our Universities and Cathedrals now copy. This was the Practice of the *Christian* Church in the purest Times.

Y E T Learning falling with the *Roman* Empire, and perfectly decaying in the *Sixth* Century among the *Gauls*, there was little or no Preaching in the *Western* Church for 500 Years together, as *Surius* tells us: Upon which, such Ignorance and Irregularities ensu'd, that Preaching was set up in the Country-Parishes in the *French* Church, and an Order made for it in the Council of *Vaison*. But still, as *Popish* Mass prevail'd, this Exercise grew out of Date: And what Stupidity and Wickedness reign'd in the *Tenth* Age, *Bellarmin* and *Baronius* acquaint us; and therefore the Council of *Trullo* made a Canon to promote Daily Preaching. But, for all this, it was almost extinct before the *Reformation*; and, where 'twas us'd, fabulous and romantick Stories were the chief Subjects of Preachers,

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chers, of which *Erasmus*, and *Faber*, and *Hottinger*, and many other Learned Men, have made too just Complaints: Nay, there are no Sermons of latter Ages, before the Dawning of the *Reformation*, worth Reading; and the best in Antiquity would hardly do *now*. In such gross Darkness and Error were we! And Ignorance is the natural Consequence of Want of Preaching, as may be seen now in the vast Kingdom of *Russia*, where they have Sermons but *Twice* a Year.

BUT the Reformation began with Frequency of Preaching, which vastly furthered the *Protestant* Cause. *Martin Luther*, who broke the Ice, was a constant Preacher, and far from thinking Afternoon Sermons Unnecessary, or Novel, as his own Sermons shew: And he declares his Thoughts, in this Case, to *Nicolas Hausman*, a *German* Bishop, and a Friend to the *Reformation*, as express'd in our *Title-Page*. And are not the *Arms* which got us the *Victory* still fit for our *Defence*? Are not these Authorities of the *Fathers*, and of this great *Reformer*, sufficient to convince the World, that Preaching Fore and After Noon is a Practice much older than the *English Puritans*? So that Afternoon Sermons are not only *Ancient*, but *Regular*, and according to the Order of our present Church. We find *Luther* Preach'd *Twice* on sundry *Holy-Days*; and the *Rubrick* after the *Nicene* Creed supposes the Intervention of a Sermon, or Homily, every Holy-Day. --- And

C 2
where,

where is the Inconveniency, or Irregularity, of all *this*?

THERE is the same Reason for frequent Sermons now -- And therefore the *Act of Uniformity* says, *Car. II. 14.* " That the Mercy, Favour, and Blessing of Almighty God, is in no wise so readily and plentifully poured, as by Common-Prayer, due using of the Sacraments, and often Preaching of the Gospel, with Devotion of the Hearers. And, God be praised, so great is the Company of Preachers among us, that no Nation abounds more in this Blessing than Ourselves. So that, I may say, the State of the Present Church, in this Respect, is happier than that of the Ancient Church : And I hope the Scarcity of Preaching before the *Reformation*, is what neither we, nor our Children, shall ever feel!

HIS Lordship was very well acquainted with all this: And therefore I conceive, Sir, that He was far from intending to reflect upon the Frequency of Preaching in the Primitive Church, or in our Own now; but that He alludes to those *Lectures*, which were first set up in the Days of Anarchy and Violence, by cruel and unreasonable Men, to Preach against the Court, and had the greatest Treasons, *in Nomine Domini*, hatch'd at them. A * Noble Author tells us, " That
Mr.

* *Car. Hist.* V. I. p. 199, and 203.

“ Mr. *Henry Burton* was a Minister and Lectu-
 “ rer of *London*, after he had been Clofet-Keeper
 “ to King *Charles I.* when Prince of *Wales*; up-
 “ on what base Motives he turn’d Lecturer, and
 “ how scandalously he behav’d himself after-
 “ wards: But was that the Fault of the *Lectu-*
 “ *rer*, or of the *Man*? Or, are Lecturers to be more
 “ blam’d for this single Instance, than Ministers are,
 “ Who were so over-run with Treason and Rebel-
 “ lion, that they presented a Declaration, Sign’d
 “ by several Hundreds of the Ministers of *London*
 “ and the Countries adjacent, to the House of
 “ Commons, against the whole Government of
 “ the Church. The same Incomparable Histo-
 “ rian farther acquaints us, * “ That St. *Antholins*
 “ was a Place in those Times made famous by
 “ some Seditious *Lecturer*, when the *Scottish*
 “ Commissioners came to *London*, and that That
 “ Church was assign’d to them for their De-
 “ votions: But, since *Henderson*, and some of
 “ their own Chaplains, still Preach’d there af-
 “ terwards, and on *Sundays* from Morning till
 “ Night, (tho’ the whole Service in the Primi-
 “ tive Church lasted not above two Hours, as St.
 “ *Chrysostom* often declares in his Sermons) let
 “ them answer for their own Ribaldry and Non-
 “ sence, and the Tumults and Riots they occa-
 “ sion’d: For sure the *English* are not to answer
 “ for that! And, shall a *Second* Instance of a vile
 “ *Lecturer*, without a *Name*, cast a blacker Shade

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upon

upon all *Lecturers* now, than the Base and Infamous Practices of *Hundreds* of *Rectors*, whose *Names* are not yet forgotten, does upon *Rectors*? Yet, if these Men ran in His Lordship's Mind when He writ this Passage, and fir'd His pious Breast with Resentment, I confess He had just Reason to think 'em *strange Teachers*, *unknown to our good old Constitution*, and such as deserved no other *Provision to be made for 'em*, than That which I care not to name.

BUT the *Second* Complaint against *Lecturers* is, " That the Result has been, that the *Afternoon Sermon* has almost quite thrown out the much better, and more profitable Exercise, of *Catechizing*; which has both the *Laws* of the *Realm*, and the *Canons* of the *Church*, on its Side; whereas the other has neither.

THIS Charge against *Lecturers*, with Regard to the Kingdom in general, might well have been spar'd; since they are so far from having thrown out the much better Exercise of *Catechizing*, that there is scarce one in an Hundred Churches in this Nation which has Afternoon-Sermons: So that the Neglect of *Catechizing* cannot lie at the *Lecturers* Doors.

HIS Lordship very well observes, Sir, " That the Constitution of our Church, in *this* Respect, is *wise*: For as by the *Sermon* in the *Morning*, those who are of *riper Years*, and better

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“ better Knowledge, in the Gospel of Christ,
 “ are Edified and Instructed; so by teaching, and
 “ expounding the *Catechism*, in the *Afternoon*,
 “ the Younger, and more Ignorant, (who are
 “ not yet capable of profiting by Sermons) are
 “ inform’d and train’d up with such a Sort of
 “ Learning as is suitable to their Age and Ca-
 “ pacities. And yet, alas! how has this prudent
 “ and useful Method been slighted by many, and
 “ neglected by more?

I am as sorry as His Lordship can be, that *Catechizing* is so much *slighted* and *neglected*; but can’t think Afternoon-Sermons are the Occasion of it in the Country, because there is hardly any such Thing throughout the whole Nation. I heartily wish that His Lordship’s *Advice* could so far prevail upon the *Country-Clergy*, as to induce ’em (not to forbear Preaching, for certainly there is no Need of *that*, but) to do something becoming their High Character and Christian Office on *Sundays* in the *Afternoon*. With His Lordship’s Leave, I should be glad it was *only* Reading Prayers; *gladder*, there was a Sermon annex to it; but *gladdest*, if a little Catechizing and Expounding were adjoin’d. I wish again, tho’ ’tis only a Wish, that this Method was observ’d, where conveniently it may, to frustrate His Lordship’s Complaints against *Lecturers*, and to answer, and *more* than answer, “ the wise Constitution
 “ of our Church in this Respect.

You

YOU have seen already, Sir, and with His Lordship's own Authority, that our Church order'd Children to be Catechised upon *Sundays* and *Holy-Days*, as often [*only*] as Need required; which the *First* Common-Prayer-Book of King *Edward VI.* explained to be *once* in *Six Weeks*: You have seen, that the *Injunctions* of Queen *Elizabeth* enjoyn'd it to be done on every *Holy-Day*, and *Second Sunday* in the Year: And, I assure you, that in all the Common-Prayer-Books, till the *last Review*, it was order'd to be done " Half an Hour before Evening-Song; that is, as the 59th. *Canon* explains it, " the Minister should, for Half an Hour, before Evening-Prayer, examine and instruct the Youth, and " Ignorant Persons of his Parish, in the Church-Catechism.

I am resolv'd to give you all you can wish for, Sir; and therefore I throw in one of the *Rubrics* at the End of the *Catechism*, which says, " That the Curate of every Parish shall diligently upon *Sundays* and *Holy-Days*, after the " *Second Lesson* at Evening-Prayer, openly in " the Church instruct and examin so many Children of his Parish sent unto him, as he shall " think *convenient*, in some Part of this Catechism --- And the 59th *Canon*, as I have just " said, enjoins every Parson, Vicar, and Curate, " upon every *Sunday* and *Holy-Day*, for Half " an Hour before Evening-Prayer, to Examine " and

“ and Instruct the Youth and Ignorant Persons
 “ of his Parish in the Church-Catechism, under
 “ severe Penalties.

THESE Orders, I own, are so far from being comply'd with *now*, that the Duty of *Catechising* is reserv'd chiefly for *Lent*, in Imitation of the *Primitive Church*. But, pray, Sir, are the *Canons* themselves, as the King's Letters Patents direct, “ Read once every Year, upon
 “ some Sundays or Holy-Days, in the After-
 “ noon, before Divine Service, the one Half one
 “ Day, and the other another Day, by every
 “ Minister, in the Church or Chapel where he
 “ hath Charge? I should be glad the *Canons* were obeyed in *every* Respect, both by *Clergy* and *Laity*; tho' they are hardly in *any*! And 'tis with Reluctance that I mention the 60th *Canon*, which relates to *Confirmation* by *Bishops*, because every Body knows how well *They* observe it --- But I chuse to draw a Veil here. Yet, after all, 'tis plain, with Respect to the Nation, that *Afternoon-Preaching* does not obstruct *Catechising*.

BUT if you are resolv'd, Sir, as I apprehend you are, to confine His Lordship's Animadversions upon *Lecturers* wholly to this *City*, I beg you will indulge the following *Apology* for 'em.

AND

AND here you will observe, Sir, that the *Sunday Afternoon Lectures* of this Town need not throw out the Exercise of *Catechising*, whether Incumbents *do so* [only] so often as Need requires, or *once* in *Six Weeks*, or on every *other Sunday*, supposing the Parish is very Large and Populous, or upon every *Sunday* and *Holy-day*, according to the Rigour and Letter of the Law : Because all this might be done, notwithstanding our Lectures! Was it done when there was no such Thing? Or, are you sure it would, if Lectures were abolish'd? But, to say no more of 'em; might not *Catechising* and *Expounding* be perform'd *now*, as the *Rubric* in the Old *Common-Prayer-Book* runs, and the *59th Canon* interprets it, " For Half an Hour " before *Evening-Prayer*, for all our Afternoon Sermons? Or, since the Church, according to our best *Commentators*, enjoins *Catechising* " only so often as Need requires; " and *Holy-days* are allotted for *that* Purpose as well as *Sundays*; are there not *Holy-days* enow in the Year to answer that End? Especially, when the Weeks of *Lent* are added to 'em? They *Catechise* every *Thursday* at *three* a Clock in the Afternoon at St. *James's*; and perhaps His Lordship, when Minister there, Piously and Prudently instituted this Custom.

THOSE who are of *Riper Years*, and better Knowledge in the Gospel of Christ, are not always Edify'd and Instructed by the
Sermon

Sermon in the Morning, because many of them are so careless as not to attend it: And tho' the *Catechism* is not Taught and Expounded every *Sunday* in the Afternoon, for the Benefit of the Younger and more Ignorant; yet I cannot from hence infer, that they are incapable of profiting by Sermons, and that such a Sort of Learning may not be so adapted as to be suitable to their Age and Capacities, and fit to train 'em up in a Christian Method.

AND, since I happen to be particularly concern'd in this Dispute, I beg, for once, Sir, that you will indulge me in mentioning your *unworthy Friend* as a Proof of what I advance: For, you may please to remember, that I have been about *Seven Years* Lecturer of your Parish; and, as you are a constant Frequenter of the Church, I doubt not but you are sensible that my Discourses have chiefly turn'd upon the *Creed*, the *Lord's-Prayer*, the *Commandments*, the *Sacraments*, and the other Fundamental Points laid down in the *Church-Catechism*: And sure I am, that many other *Gentlemen* in my Station pursue the same Course. And, if the *Old* and the *Young*, the *Wise* and the *Ignorant*, are thus reminded and instructed together by *Afternoon - Lectures*, What is their Crime? Hard Words, High-flown Phrases, and Quaint Expressions, are now quite discarded by all Preachers of Sense in this Town. Their Method is so Plain and Natural, their Stile so Easy and Familiar, and yet so Courtly, that the

Best

Best Capacities may generally hear with Pleasure, and the Worst with Instruction. And here I have a just and proper Handle, if I was desirous of extolling my own Order, and capable of doing it, to pay the *English - Clergy* the greatest and truest Compliment that was ever made to a *Profession*--- But I forbear it, and only request you to read over the *Sermons* of that Learned and Pious *Prelate*, whom you have drawn into this Dispute, and tell me, whether there is any Thing to be met with among the Writings of the *Ancients*, or among all the Foreign *Modern Divines* of the Christian World, comparable to 'em, in the Respects I have hinted. And hence I would observe, that if the most *Young* and *Ignorant*, as well as the *Older* and *Wiser*, do not profit by *Afternoon-Sermons*, 'tis not the Fault of the *Lectures*, but of the *Lecturers*.

BUT I entirely agree with His Lordship, in thinking, " That if *Lectures* must be allow'd, " *Catechising*, at least, should not be omitted. And so far is it from being omitted, (I write it with Pleasure and Triumph) within the *Bills of Mortality*, where almost all the Lectures of this Nation are, that, I believe, the Present Generation of Children, both *Rich* and *Poor*, can give a much better Account of their Faith and Catechism, than either the Children in the Primitive Ages could, or all those who have been before 'em since the Establishment of Christianity among us; those, especially, who liv'd before

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fore Lectures were in Fashion; and that the Children, within *this Compass*, would, upon Trial, be found far to excel all *Others* in *Great-Britain*, where Lectures no Way hinder their Instruction: Tho', even in most Parts of the Country, the *Young* are not so *Ignorant* as they us'd to be a few Years ago.

THIS Happy Improvement, I own, Sir, is, in a great Measure, owing to our *Charity-Schools*, which ought never to forget the vast Obligations they are under to His GRACE of *Canterbury*. To them is it owing, that our Poor Children are train'd up in the Fear and Nurture of the Lord, and taught to give a better Account of their Faith than the *Priests* of this Nation formerly could: For the chief Design of this Charity is, after they have learnt to Read, to ground 'em in the Church-Catechism.

AND, that our Young *Nobles* and *Gentry*, and others of the *Better Sort*, are not wanting in this Respect, whatever ill Uses they make of a good Education afterwards, is to be attributed (and with Honour and Gratitude) to the Christian Care and Industry of those Gentlemen who have the Tuition and Forming of them. And, tho' many worthy and learned *Lay-Men* are employ'd in this Work, and discharge their great Trust in all Respects, yet I cannot forbear congratulating my Country, that
our

our Principal Schools are filled by some of our *Chief Clergy*; and most others, by those of Figure and Reputation, who do, as they are more particularly bound, make *Catechizing* as constant and essential a Part of their Scholars Exercise and Duty, as any other whatsoever. For which Reason, I suppose, the 78th *Canon* enjoins
 “ *Curates*, desirous to teach Schools, to be Licens’d before Others: And the 79th *Canon*
 “ obliges all School-Masters to teach their Children the *Catechism*.

BUT, should you tell me, Sir, that, tho’ *High* and *Low*, one with another, are thus so well vers’d in our *Catechism*, yet ’tis no Thanks to the *Lecturers*; I answer, That, if this excellent End is attain’d by just and honest Methods, tho’ otherwise than our Church orders, and *that* Time is spent in the Service of Religion, which should be taken up in *this* Labour, She has Reason to *Rejoice*, and no Man to *Complain*. But the constant *Catechizing* twice or thrice a Week every *Lent* in all our Churches, and the frequent *Catechizings* which are each Lord’s-Day, and oftner, in this Town, should not be so far forgotten, as to make you think the *Clergy* disregard the *Rubrics* and *Canons*, and neglect the Duty of “ training up Children in the Way
 “ they should go.

I profess the highest Deference, Sir, to the Judgment and Opinions of His *Grace’s* two Incomparable

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comparable *Predecessors*, whom He is pleas'd to quote; and also for *His Own*, which will always carry with me Authority and Weight: But, after all, must beg to be excus'd from thinking, that what Arch-bishop *Sheldon*, in 1672,³ and Arch-bishop *Sancroft*, in 1688, how Seasonable and Wise soever the *Articles* might be which they sent to their *Bishops*, " That the *Clergy* " should diligently *Catechize* the *Children*, and " *Youth* of their *Parishes*, (as the *Rubric* of " the *Common-Prayer-Book*, and 59th *Canon* " enjoin) " much affects our present *Lecturers*: Because these *Injunctions* were sent to the *Bishops*, from them to the *Incumbents*, (not the *Lecturers*) and, if they were not obey'd, must the *Lecturers* answer for it? Was there no Time in the whole Week to *Catechise*, but upon one particular Half Hour on *Sunday* in the Afternoon? Or, could they not order their *Lecturers*, if they did not think fit to do it themselves, to perform it after the *Second-Lesson*? But, as *Critical* as ever that *Fracture* was, no ill Effects ensu'd for Want of *Catechizing*: For the Crisis was too short to admit of that. The Good *Metropolitan*, no Doubt, thought there was a *King* over Him, who might Reign *many Years*, and so, by his Zeal and Authority, seduce Multitudes to the Errors of *Popery*; which inclin'd Him to look so far forward, as to take Care of the succeeding Generation, and to secure it by constant *Catechising*: But so it happen'd,

pen'd, that the Then present Generation was *so* *Catechiz'd*, as to take away all his *Grace's* Fears of *Popery*. Nor indeed can I think *Catechising* was *then* the properest Method of Defence, or that it will *ever* be so, in this Nation, in such Cases: For then, the *one* Side will have only the *Children* to Discipline, whilst the *other* has the *Men*. Such *Violent Measures*, and *Critical Junctures*, seldom last long here; and therefore, I conceive, that *Preaching*, even *Afternoon Preaching*, is of much more Service at such Times than *Catechizing* --- Tho' I agree, *That* should not be wholly omitted.

I HAVE hitherto postpon'd the principal Point to be answer'd under this *Head*, which is, " That Lecturers have neither the *Laws* of " the *Realm*, nor the *Canons* of the *Church*, on their Side: But I shall make it appear to you, Sir, that they have *both*.

THE *Act* of *Uniformity*, *Car.* II. 14. places *Lecturers* in the best Company among the *Clergy*, by the same Authority, and obliges 'em to subscribe the same Declaration, not only with *Rectors*, but also with *Deans* and *Canons*, and *Masters* of *Colleges*. And, after such Subscription is made, as the *Act* requires, every *Lecturer* shall procure a Certificate under the Hand and Seal of the respective Arch-bishop, Bishop, or Ordinary of the Diocese; who are thereby enjoin'd

enjoin'd and requir'd, upon Demand, to make and deliver the same -- So that *they* are not left to the meer Mercy of Bishops, or Arch-bishops ; but are to be admitted in the same Manner, and depriv'd for the same Reason, with their *Betters*. Nay, *Lecturers* are mention'd far oftner in this *Act* than any other Sort of *Clergymen*. There are *Five* Sections together spent upon them ; and the very *Sermons* before the *Universities*, (of which there are *Three* a Week, besides *Sunday*, at *One* of them,) are here call'd *Lectures*. *Stat. 17. Car. II. Cap. 2.* *Lecturers* are mention'd again, put upon the same Foot, and under the same Penalties, with *Parsons* and *Vicars*, according to the *Stat. 14. Car. II. Cap. 4.*

THO' *Lecturers*, Sir, were far worse Men *Sixty Years* since, than they are *now*, in many Respects, yet you see what Opinion the *Legislature* had of them. The chief Obligation laid upon them, indeed, in these *Statutes*, was, that they should not be *Rebels* ; which is so far from being a *Compliment* to the *Lecturers* of that Time, that it rather shews their *Unworthiness*, and the Distrust the Government had of 'em ; and not without Reason, the old Leaven of Malice and Wickedness being not *then* worn out. But, if the Legislature thought 'em worthy of such Privileges *then*, what do they deserve *now* ? *Now*, when a Spirit of *Sincerity* and *Truth* and *Loyalty* reigns among 'em ? *Now*, when all the Reasons of suspecting, or disliking

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'em,

em, are taken away; and all the Reasons the Supream Powers had *then* in View for establishing them, with many additional Ones, still remain? So that I cannot apprehend what His Lordship means by saying, Lecturers are not wholly contrary to our Present Establishment, since they are establish'd by *Acts of Parliament*.

So far are *Lecturers*, Sir, from being contrary to the *Laws* of the *Realm*---And judge you whether *they* are repugnant to the *Canons* of the *Church*, when the 56th puts *Rectors* and *Lecturers* together, and orders 'em *both* to read Divine Service, and administer the Sacraments, twice a Year, upon Pain of being equally suspended by the Diocesan. Several other *Canons* mention *Lecturers*; but I spare the Trouble of reciting 'em.

AND now, Sir, I am forc'd to come to the *Third* Charge against *Lecturers*, which is very heavy indeed--- " That these New *Teachers* " and *Lecturers* Preach (oftentimes) not so much " to the real Benefit, as to the Fancies and Inclinations of those by whom they are to be " Paid for it. *Pudet hæc Opprobria, &c.*

AND, can all the Wit of Man, Sir, help this? Sorry I am, that the Meanest People, in a Free-born Nation, should be under such Slavery, as to submit their Labour to the Fancies and Inclinations of those by whom they are to be

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be paid for it, when such Labour is for *their* real Benefit --- Much sorer, that our Constitution should be so defective, as to leave *Gentlemen*, the *Professors* of *Physick* and *Law*, the *Guardians* of our *Lives* and *Estates*, who are not only Men of the Best *Families* and *Accomplishments* in our *Nation*, but an *Honour* to it throughout all *Europe*, at the Fancies and Inclinations of those by whom they are to be paid. But neither the *Men*, nor the *Gentlemen*, in this Case, are much to be pity'd; since *They* have it so much in their *Power*, if they are *Once* injur'd, as to be their own Carvers the *Second* Time. But His Lordship knew that the *Case* of *Lecturers* was far otherwise, tho' their *Families*, and the *Expence* of their *Education*, is generally the same -- He knew, and therefore compassionately bewail'd the *Temptation* they were under, to Preach to the Fancies and Inclinations of those by whom they were to be paid for it -- And, therefore, his Lordship's Concern was very kind; since *Lecturers* are under the hard Necessity, whether they Preach to the real Benefit, or to the Fancies and Inclinations of their *Payers*, to state the Case as He does: Because *their* Pay-Masters may do as they *please* -- Let me then beg Leave to sit down, and lament for a few Minutes, the deplorable Condition of *My self* and *Brethren* -- And yet I cannot call it so *Deplorable* neither, when I reflect upon the friendly Generosity of our *Citizens*, and kind *Benefactors*; nor do I

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complain

complain of *Their* Generosity to *us*, who have yet done us so much Justice, that *we* have not any where else appeal'd for it. And if *we* are *contented*, why are *others* *uneasy*?

THAT some *Few* of these *new Teachers*, Sir, may be so base and mercenary, as to seek more their own *Lucre*, than the *Glory* of God; as to consult the *Fancies* and *Opinions*, more than the real Benefit, of those to whom they Preach; is no great Wonder, as Times go: But, I verily believe, that the Number of such *Wretches* is very small; and, I thank God, I am *acquainted* with none of 'em.

THE *Lecturers* of this Town, Sir, had the same *Education*, have the same *Degrees*, and, I am persuaded, have the same *Regard* for *Truth*, with the *Incumbents* of it; tho' they have not the same Encouragement, or Certainty of Subsistence. --- And yet, if you'll take the Trouble of comparing the *Sermons* Printed by the *Incumbents* and *Lecturers*, I dare say you will find the *Lecturers* full as Sound and Orthodox as the *Incumbents*! You will find that *they* have boldly oppos'd *Popery*, *Heresy* and *Schism*, and that the Precariousness of their Maintenance did not tie up their Pens.

AND, Sir, at this very Day, if you examin *their* Doctrine, and Manner of Life, you'll have little Room to complain: Little Reason to accuse 'em of using *deceitful Words*, and daubing

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daubing with untempered Morter, to receive the vile Wages of Sin -- But, on the contrary, that *they* make the pure Word of God the Rule of their Preaching, as expounded by the Primitive *Fathers* and *Councils* of the Christian Church, and confirm'd and bounded by the *Rubricks*, *Articles*, and *Canons* of our own. -- And here *Lecturers* stand upon sure Ground, and need never to be ashamed whilst they so stand, however particular Parties of Men are pleas'd or displeas'd. -- As to their Manner of Life, I hope 'tis such as becomes the Gospel of Christ.

BUT, tho' I have been oblig'd to run this *Parallel* so far between *Incumbents* and *Lecturers*; and hope I have done it with Decency; yet sure I am, that it was with no View of putting 'em upon an Equality, of encouraging *Lecturers* to oppose *Rectors*, to form separate Interests, to be busy in Parish-Affairs, or any Way in the World to prejudice 'em in their *Dues*, *Rights* and *Privileges*. -- For the Duty of these *Lecturers*, I am now speaking of, is only to *Preach* on *Sundays* in the *Afternoon*. --- But if, in the Absence of the *Ministers* and *Curates*, they can any Way be serviceable to the Parishes they belong to; they ought to do it, and without Fee or Reward, leaving that for those to whom it belongs. Yet, considering the Weakness of Human Nature, I can't help wishing, that, since *Lecturers* are employ'd, and approv'd of by our *Laws*, this Objection of his Lordship's

was taken away, and their Income so ascertain'd, as to be under no Suspicion of Preaching to the Fancies and Inclinations of their Benefactors. And I am so far from wishing this, I assure you, out of Covetousness, to enrich *Lecturers*, or to burthen *Parishes*, that I should be glad to see it done, tho' the Legal Stated Produce of every *Lecture* in Town was less than 'tis now upon Contribution. Nor do I despair of seeing the Time, when a *British* Parliament will, upon due Application, take away this Temptation both from *Preachers* and *Hearers*.

AND now, Sir, having gone through the Particulars of your *Letter*, and *Answer'd* 'em as well as I could in this short Time, and without the least intended Offence to any Body; I am sure you will suffer me to offer a few Hints in Favour of *Lecturers*.

AND here I need not say any Thing in Justification of the *Professors* and *Lecturers* in both our *Universities*, who are Men of the best Learning and Abilities, of singular Service to those illustrious Places, and consequently to the whole Nation. There the Founders of 'em are justly Commemorated, and God Prais'd for their good Works, as some of the best of Benefactors to Mankind. Somewhat of the same Nature might be urg'd for the Liberal Founder of the *Lectures*, or *Professorships*, of *Gresham-College*, and all other Establishments of that Kind. Were they
not

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not All piously intended to promote Religion, Learning, good Manners? And do they not answer these noble Ends? If not, whose Fault is it?

BUT, if we must speak of *Lecturers* only with Regard to *Preaching*; sure no Apology can be expected for all those Charitable Legacies and Donations, which have been left by many Well-dispos'd Persons, to support the Week-Day Sermons, not only in *London* and *Westminster*, but also in several other Cities and Places in this Kingdom. It would be very ungrateful and unchristian not to keep the Memories of such Munificent People in Remembrance! Tho' they are Dead, they still Speak, and ought to be Celebrated for it! Without Doubt, they have their Reward; yet this Acknowledgement is due to their Ashes, and ought ever to be paid, as a Tribute to past Virtue, and an Excitement to Posterity to rival their Actions and Examples! And surely he knows very little of the Present State of the Church, so corrupted in Faith and Practice, who can think these *Lectures* useless now; and has a mean Opinion of the *Preachers* and *Hearers* of'em, if he can fancy such *Sermons* don't contribute to the checking of Infidelity, and the Encrease of real Sanctity and Holiness! For, as *Morality*, and the *Heresies* of the Times, were the chief Matter of the Discourses of the *Fathers*, so also are they of *Ours*. I must therefore wish, that more of these *Lectures* were establish'd, (as one

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has

has lately been, by a *Worthy Lady*, and our * *Good Mellitus*, our *Belov'd Diocesan*) than that any of 'em were retrench'd. I might have mention'd before, the vast Advantages *Christianity* has receiv'd from the Honourable Mr. *Boyle's* Lecture; but, That is too well known to need Mentioning: Nor is it fear'd, but that, by the Blessing of Heaven, the *One* will, in Time, as effectually silence all the Enemies to our *Saviour's Divinity*, as the *Other* has all those to the *Being* of a *God*.

BUT, Sir, if you have no Objection against *Lecturers* in general, nor *Preaching-Lecturers* upon *Week-Days*, whether Preparation-Sermons for the Blessed Sacrament, those on *Christmas-Day*, *Good-Friday*, or any other Days enjoin'd to be observ'd by the Church of *England*, but confine me to speak soly to *Sunday-Lecturers*. I obey your Commands, and only desire to ask, whether you think all those *Lectures* on *Sunday-Mornings*, at 6, and 7, and 8 a Clock, of which Sort we have many in this Town, some supported by the Pious Gifts of the Deceas'd, and others by the Charitable Contributions of the Living, whereby the Prayers of our Church are Read, Sermons Preach'd, and the Holy Communion often Administer'd, to Persons who could not so conveniently, or perhaps not at all, perform those Divine Duties at the stated Times,

* First Bishop of London, 604.

Times, want an Excuse? The *Act of Uniformity*, Car. 11. 14. enjoyns, " that no *Lecture* " upon *Sundays*, *Holy-Days*, or other *Week-* " *Days*, shall be Preach'd, without having the " *Common-Prayer* first Read; which makes it oftner read than it would otherwise be. And, are not these *Lectures*, so Piously intended, so Religiously carry'd on, and which contribute so much to the Quieting of Consciences, to the Saving of Souls, to the Honour of *Christ* and His Institutions, and to the Good of Society, to be, by all Means, Applauded, Encourag'd, Continu'd!

AND, Sir, if you grant me *this*; pray what Fault can you find with our *Sunday-Evening-Lectures*, which are *Weekly* supported in Many of our Churches, and *Monthly* in Others? As, by the *Morning Lectures*, Servants, Apprentices, and other well-inclin'd Persons, partake of the Ordinances of the Church, which they could *not* do at the stated Times: So also do such People, and those of an Higher Rank, who could not attend the Afternoon-service, supply that Deficiency by these *Evening-Lectures*. And, is it not a Subject of Rejoycing, if several Devout Members of our Church enjoy all these *Four* Advantages, as I believe they do, of offering up their Prayers in Public to God, and hearing His Word Read and Preach'd to em? Certain I am, as you have seen above, that *Christians* were wont, in the Primitive and Purest Ages of the Church,

not

not to be tir'd with *Three* or *Four* Sermons on a Lord's-Day.

AND sure, Sir, you must like these *Evening-Lectures* very well, when you consider, that they don't hinder *Catechizing*, but promote it: That great Numbers of Children are examin'd in 'our Church-Catechism at 'em, requir'd to prove every Article of it from Holy Writ, and that hereby they are taught, not only to *Rival*, but to *Excel*, all the other Youth of the Age. And, not only *so*; but the *Discourses* which follow from the *Pulpit* upon these Occasions, are often in a Catechetical Stile, and usually so Plain and Practical, as to be suitable to their Age and Capacities, fit to ground 'em in the first Principles of the Oracles of God, and to train 'em up in the Way they *should* go. All which is no Burthen to the People, who are at Liberty to throw in their Mites, or to keep 'em to rust and canker in their Pockets. And here I have another fair Opportunity of extolling our *Charity-Schools*: But since they are *thus* known by their Fruits, which *so* apparently shine before Men, I shall pass 'em over *as* above all Praise of Words, and only silently glorify our *Father*, and our *Queen*, who are in *Heaven*, for 'em! And, let me add, our *King* on *Earth*.

SINCE you have forc'd me, Sir, against my Inclinations, to be a mean Advocate for *Lecturers*, I hope you can't think this foreign to my Purpose.

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Purpose. But, if you are resolv'd to tie me down closely to *Lecturers* on *Sundays* in the *Afternoon*, I submit, and beg you to accept of what just *hastily* offers to my Pen in their *Defence*. And I shall take it for granted here, that these *Lecturers* are Men of the same *Education* and *Degrees* with our *Incumbents*; that they Preach as sound Doctrine; that they need not obstruct *Catechizing*, as it appears by the Effects they don't in this Town; that they are so far from being contrary to our present Establishment, that it approves of 'em: If not, how come they to be chosen by the *Parishoners*, to be suffer'd by the *Rectors*, and to be licens'd by the *Bishops*? I could name *Sunday-Afternoon-Lectures* which were founded many Years ago, and are still supported by Legacies: But, to instance in one, you may please to recollect, that there are 7 *l.* a Year left, and so long since, that we can't yet trace the Original of it, to maintain such a *Lecture* in our Own Church. If such Charities were then thought Illegal, how came the *Lectures* to be founded, to be hitherto continu'd, and the Salaries paid?

If you say, Sir, there were no such Persons in the Primitive Church; I answer, that all the *Clergy* were in the State of *Lecturers* then. If you say, there was no such *Afternoon-Preaching*, for many Ages, after Churches were built and endow'd; the more was the Pity. But, if you say they were not *so* Customary in this City till

till the Times of Confusion, I grant it, and rejoyce in the *Effect*, tho' I lament the *Cause*: For, when they were then usher'd in by our Church, into many Churches, 'twas indeed without any other *Law* than *Necessity*, which is always a *Law* of it self. The *Disloyalists* first set 'em up, encouraged 'em, and made the vilest Uses of 'em: And this provok'd the Church to look out for an Antidote to expel this Venom; and the best she could think of, was to oppose 'em with their own Weapons, by having *Lecturers* too, who might confute Gainfayers, and preserve Her Members from Contagion. And is She to be blam'd for Self-preservation? Especially, when there was no Law against Her *so* acting? Or, had Her *Adversaries*, at least, better Right to send out *Goliath's* against Her, than She had to send out Some to demolish 'em? To sow *Tares*, than *She* had to sow *Wheat*?

FOR this Reason, Sir, as I have been inform'd, were all the *Week-Day-Lectures* at St. Bartholomew-Exchange founded, by Christians who had *Zeal* with *Knowledge*: And God grant they may ever answer this End, and so the Intention of their Donors! That they may ever combat with *Error*, *Heresy*, *Schism*, and all *Antimonarchical Principles*!

BUT, if you grant the Reason of the *first* Institution of *Lecturers* to be Good, yet dislike 'em *now* for their *Novelty*, because they are generally

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nerally of about only 100 Years standing; I assure you, Sir, that I like *Novelties*, either in *Church* or *State*, (tho' I have shewn above that *Lecturers* are no *Novelty*) as little as you possibly can; and promise, that, if you will rectify some *Worse Novelties*, which have since incorporated themselves with our Establishment, I will be the Foremost to strike out *that* of *Lecturers*. But, if *All Novelties* are to be condemn'd, I could soon give you a very Large *Catalogue*: Yet I am so far of another Opinion, that I think the Exigencies of Times and Places, and Publick Welfare, may Authorize such *Novelties*, as are not *Contrary to a Divine Law* --- Which, I believe, you will own Sermons on *Sundays* in the Afternoon *not* to be.

AND now, Sir, I shall wind up this long and incorrect *Letter*, with shewing a few of the *Advantages* of continuing such *Lecturers* as we are discoursing of, and of the *Disadvantages* which would probably ensue upon the *Discontinuance* of 'em.

AND, can I begin with a greater Honour to them, than the Drawing and Keeping of People to the Church? For, since the same *Distemper* still rages, ought not the same *Remedy* to be still apply'd? (This His Lordship owns, in Concurrency with his last Grace of *Canterbury*!) Those who differ from us, have more *Lectures* now, than ever; the People have full as itching Ears:

Ears: And, therefore, can our *Lectures* be thought more unnecessary now, than they were at first? Ought we to suffer our Opponents to excel us in any Respect? Or, should we not be in Labours more abundant, tho' you think them above Measure? For, if *Preachers* fail, *Seducers* will not; but the Defection of our People to Popish *Superstition*, or Seditious *Novelties*, or downright *Atheism*, would ensue --- For these Charmers would fascinate the Multitude, and draw many away; but constant Preaching hinders the *Two Extremes* from swallowing up our Church.

WERE we all of the same Opinion, were there no Strivings of Parties, no Emulations for different Ends, and each of us so Religious as we ought to be: Was the Case in *Great-Britain*, as a Learned *Author* tells us 'tis in *Sueden*,^{*} Where the *Lutheran* Religion has never
 “ been distracted by *Non-Conformity* since the
 “ *Reformation*; all the Orders of Men agreeing
 “ in a constant Attendance on Divine Service,
 “ and a Zeal for their own Way, without any
 “ nice Enquiries into disputable Points, either
 “ in their own Tenets, or those of other
 “ Churches; whereby it becomes the Business
 “ of their Preachers, rather to persuade the Practice of Piety, than to oppose the Doctrine
 “ of others, or defend their own: -- Catechetical

* Account of *Sueden*, 3d Edition, p. 25.

tical Discourses out of the Desk might do full as well as Sermons from the Pulpit on *Sundays* in the *Afternoon*: But since this is rather to be wish'd, than hop'd for, we are to use all justifiable *Means* to *Save Some*; and 'tis lawful to try to please the People for their Edification, after the Example of *St. Paul*. *

AND, since we are so divided in Opinion, that we set up Altar against Altar, and seem more to consult our Palates and Fancies, than Truth and substantial Holiness; since we find our *Liturgy*, which is the most primitive and compleat Collection of Publick Devotion that is us'd in any Church in the World, does not keep up an adequate Sense of its Excellence, and Spirit of Piety; since the Humour so runs, that *Catechizing* and *Expounding*, when added to the *Common-Prayer*, are unfortunately thought so dry and jejune, that they are not duly attended; and since all *Discipline* seems to be so fast a sleep, that we know not when it will awaken; what other Method have we left of drawing Men to the Church, than by their *Ears*? Especially, when we foresee that they would probably be led, by enticing Words, to other Places, if they were not thus drawn Thither! 'Twas a Saying in *St. Chrysostome's* Days, "Why should I go to Church, if I cannot hear a *Sermon*? We hear the *same* Things read every Day to us out of Scripture! They complained *then*, that Sermons " were

* 1 Cor. x. 33.

" were not *Frequent* enough, or too *Short* --- And People would part with any other Office of Religion *now*, rather than Sermons.

BUT this is not all, Sir --- For such *Lectures* are of singular Service, even to those who would go to no other Place of Worship than the Church, if they were not instructed there. The Best and Wifest of us may well bear with a Sermon in the Afternoon, tho' we heard one in the Morning: Especially, since *One* Sermon was far longer formerly than *Two* are now; when they Preach'd till the *Tongues* of the one, and the *Ears* of the other, were quite tired out --- But such is the Delicacy and Tenderneſs of our Nobility and Gentry, at least in the Winter, that they seldom get ready for the Morning-Service: And, I fear, if there was no Sermon in the Afternoon, tho' too Few come *then* into the House of the Lord, there would be much Fewer.

AND then, Sir, Seryants, &c. who are much the greatest Part of this Town, tho' they have an equal Title with their Masters to the Means of Grace and Hopes of Glory, are generally so confin'd, that they have no Time to pay their Addresses to their Maker, and to learn their Duty to Him and their Governours, but in the Afternoon. So that High and Low, Rich and Poor, one with another, as Matters now stand, seem to require these Lectures: For bare Catechizing and Expounding, you are perswaded, would hardly

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hardly induce many to think the *Church* more pleasant than the *Fields*. Accordingly, in the Reign of King *James I.* before Lectures were so frequent, the People were wont to spend the Afternoon on Sundays at Foot-ball, and such-like Diversions; and therefore that Learned Monarch writ a most Orthodox Treatise of the Observation of the Lord's-Day, and dedicated it to the Bishops and Clergy of *England*.

THESE Advantages, Sir, affect the City in General -- But, among those which are Particular, I am sorry to mention One; which is, that it sometimes so unfortunately happens, upon some Account or other, that the Parishioners are so prejudic'd against their Minister, that they will not go to hear him in the Morning; and, if he either Preach'd, or Expounded, in the Afternoon, would refuse to do it: The Consequence of which is, that they either wholly forsake the assembling of themselves together, or go to separate assemblies, or at least break the Parochial Unity and Communion of Saints, by licentiouslŷ Gadding to other Churches; a Practice contrary to the OEconomy of our Church, and productive of numerous ill Consequences. In this bad Case, should it happen, I think 'tis very happy that we have Lecturers to keep Folks to their own Churches in the Afternoon: For, however it may be with Incumbents, who are put upon 'em, and, whether they like 'em or not, must take 'em *for better for worse*, one would

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suppose

suppose the Lecturers, who are their own Choice; by whom they are voluntarily paid, and whom they can either *Turn* out, or *Starve* in, should not be unacceptable. But I put this only as a Case in Possibility --- And, if it ever falls out, that Lecturer would be very base and ungenerous, who took Advantage of his Rector's Misfortunes, and insinuated himself at his Expence; whereas he ought rather to do all in his Power, where there is Room, to restore his Credit and Authority.

BUT, Sir, were all Ministers ever so acceptable and belov'd in their Parishes, and oblig'd to Preach *Twice* in the same Church every Sunday, or to Catechize and Expound, yet Lecturers are still of singular Service to *them*, and the Inhabitants: For, how well soever these Duties might be discharg'd, we have all such a natural Itch to Novelty and Variety, that I question whether their Labours would be so agreeable as they now are, whilst they discharge only the Function of the Morning, and leave that of the Afternoon to Lecturers. I could appeal to Experience for the Truth of this Remark, and instance in some Parishes within the Bills of Mortality, where the Effects are bad of the Ministers supplying *both Parts* of the Day; and yet might be rectify'd, and without the least Prejudice to their Incomes, if they would allow the Parishoners to elect Lecturers. I mention this only as a plain Proof of what I advance, and without any invidious Design.

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MANY Incumbents, Sir, have not Constitutions strong enough to perform their Offices in Person, without weekly disordering themselves, impairing their Health, and shortning their Lives. What ought they in Prudence to do then? Why, they must pay Assistants to supply their Places, and so pinch themselves and Families. Is not the Case much better now for *them*?

BUT, were all Rectors never so strong and healthy, very *Few* of 'em, I'm persuaded, have so little Modesty, as to think themselves capable of composing *Two* Discourses every Week fit to be deliver'd to the Congregations of this Town, considering the various Calls they have out of their Studies, to Baptize, to Visit the Sick, to Bury the Dead, to answer the Avocations of their own Families, to beg for the Poor and Distress'd, and to solicit Favours, and do Good Offices, for their Friends, their Brethren, their Acquaintance: For, I may say, without blushing, that no *Body* of Men in this City have such frequent Applications to 'em, are made the Instruments of conveying so many Favours, and more sincerely endeavour to serve all Ranks and Degrees of Human-kind, than the *Clergy* -- Yet I mention this, not as their Hardship, but their Honour; since it shews the Credit they are still in, and their Readiness to copy their Master's Example, "Who always went about *Doing Good*!

BUT, to pass over every other Advantage of Lecturers to Incumbents -- Pray, Sir, who generally enjoy the Lectures of this Town? Do not the Parish-Ministers? And, do they not want 'em? For, I fancy, that, taking One Living with Another within the *Walls*, after Curates are paid, and Taxes, Expences, and Disbursements, inevitably attending 'em, discharg'd, they hardly bring in clear 150 *l. per Annum*. And what a Maintenance is this, considering *Where*, and *How* they must Live, for a *London* Rector and his Family? What Provision can he make for his Wife and Children out of it? The *Lectures*, therefore, which they have, satisfy their Curates, hedge in the Outgoings of their Livings, and help to keep 'em in tolerable Plight. And who can find in his Heart to envy 'em this?

YET I am far from upbraiding the Generosity of the Citizens: For, were they not liberal above *Law*, few of their Pastors could live. I might nevertheless give a Hint here, of the Difference of the Value of Money *when* their Rates were settled, and *now*: And hope to be excus'd, if I was so Bold, or so Compassionate, (call it which you will) as to wish this Hardship was inspected by the Legislature.

NOR is it only an Ease and Profit to the Ministers, but also an Honour and Pleasure to the Citizens, to have their Churches thus decently supply'd,

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supply'd, commonly by Three Clergymen, Pastor, Curate, Lecturer. As they are not only richer, but abound more than Country-Parishes, in all the Comforts and Elegancies of Life; so may they ever continue to do, and as well in Spirituals, as Temporals!

NOR are Lecturers and Curates only of Advantage to the Ministers and People in these Respects; but also, the great Number of Lectures and Cures here are of vast Service to the Church in general, by having so many of the Younger Clergy supported, by these Methods, in this Town. And yet who can say there are too many? Or, that we are over-run with em? Or, that they are burthensom? When he recollects the small Pittance of their Maintenance, and that we have scarce one Clergyman to a thousand Laymen.

LECTURERS, Sir, are also greatly beneficial to this City, by being, as it were, a Nursery for Rectors of it, and training 'em up, Step by Step, to be qualify'd for that Post. Reward is the Mother of Industry: And, as all the Lectures of this Town, and many of the Livings, are at the Disposal of the Citizens, young Gentlemen, who seldom come full ripe out of the Universities, when they find they are to be encourag'd and prefer'd here according to their Merits, double their Diligence and Studies in Order to deserve Promotion.

AND, were it not for this Method, how could the City be properly supply'd with Incumbents? If you say, out of the Universities; I grant it -- But, pray, did not these Lecturers and Curates come out of the Universities? And, after they have been employ'd many Years in these lower Stations, ought they not to be suppos'd (Practical Knowledge being certainly the Best) more fitly qualify'd for Parish-Priests, than those who were never conversant in Parochial Affairs? But, if you say, they may be call'd out of the Country; I fancy you would be disappointed, tho' there are many Worthy and Learned Gentlemen among the Country-Clergy: For the Air, the Customs, the Expences, are so different here from what they are there, that, I believe, Few would care to quit a Living of 100*l.* a Year there, for one of 150*l.* here. And, as these Lectures are of Service to the City; so also are they to the Country, by breeding up and qualifying fit Clergymen to be sent into it, for whom there is not Employment here. All which tends to the Glory of the Nation, as well as of the Church.

I have purposely omitted, Sir, to mention one Thing in Favour of Lecturers, which is, that there is not Room in many Churches for all the Parishioners, or a Quarter of 'em, to pay their Duty to God together in the Morning; because our New Churches go on *so fast*, or ought so to do, that I hope that Argument will be soon taken away,
and

and many Persons left without Excuse, who now make that an Apology for staying at Home, or going Abroad, or running to Neighbouring Churches, or such Places of Worship as are only *Tolerated*.

AND, if *Effects* may justify *Causes*, pardon me in observing, Sir, that the meanest of our Order are not chosen into Lectures in this Town; or, if they are, that Lectures so exceedingly improve 'em, that a great Part, not only of our *Late*, but also of our *Present* Bishops, mounted directly out of these Stations into their Episcopal Sees; and that Men of the best Figure in our Profession fill many of these Posts now: Which should be so interpreted, I think, that the Court is so far from disapproving of 'em, that it distinguishes 'em; and that the Citizens are so far from deserving Censure, that they seem to merit Thanks from the Legislature, for making such proper Choices of their Lecturers, and encouraging 'em so long with their Bounty and Liberality, till they are fit for the Royal Countenance, and thought qualify'd to serve the Church and State in the Highest Posts.

YOU see, Sir, with what great Freedom and Plainness I have asserted the Authority of *our* Preaching, tho' we are not inspir'd, tho' we are not sent and authoriz'd by God in an extraordinary Way, and endow'd with Miraculous Gifts, as the first Preachers were: Yet, since St. *Chryso-*

stome says, " St. Paul converted the World, not " so much by his *Miracles*, as by his *continual* " *Preaching*, can you think our Labour is wholly in vain now? That I have pursu'd this Argument so far, is not only in Obedience to your *Letter*, but also to justify a Divine Institution, which has continu'd *more* or *less* in all Periods of the Church, and is now, I think, by vast Industry and Application, advanc'd to the highest Degree of Eminence in *Our Own*; Foreigners generally taking not that Pains in *Ten* Sermons, which many of us do in *One*. And, as we preach oftner than Foreign Churches; so we keep the Lord's-Day better observ'd; which supports the spiritual Grandeur of Religion among us more than other Nations.

ALL this, Sir, you have forc'd me to say unwillingly: And, how many *Blushes* soever it may have cost me in writing it, yet this is my Comfort, that I think I have written such *Truths* as need not *blush*.

AND, Sir, since I have ventur'd so far, and find my Face begins to harden a little now, I shall dare to tell you one *Truth* more: Which is, That since Lecturers are legal Ministers, Ministers of your own chusing, and so useful and advantageous in many Respects, you are bound, both by the *Law* and the *Gospel*, as I could soon make appear, to Support and Maintain 'em in an handsome Manner. How little Reason I have
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my self to complain, upon this Account, you very well know; how many Reasons I have to thank and esteem the Parish *we* belong to, you know likewise: And, therefore, I may speak, both with *Modesty* to *my self*, and *Honour* to our *Parish*, upon this Point, in Hopes of doing Justice and Service to other Gentlemen in my own Station.

FOR a Proof of this, I refer you to the *Offertory*, or *Sentences* in the *Communion-Office*, which are *Texts* out of the *New Testament*, selected by the Church, as Instructions and Exhortations to this great Duty, written long before any Legal Provision was made for the Clergy, and still *as* binding, where there is no such Provision yet made for 'em: For the Ministers of the Gospel, without any Distinction, are to live by the Gospel, according to the Commands of our Saviour, and the Practice of His Apostles. * “ Who
 “ goeth a Warfare at any Time of his own Cost?
 “ Who planteth a Vineyard, and eateth not of the
 “ Fruit thereof? Or who feedeth a Flock, and eat-
 “ eth not of the Milk of the Flock? If we have
 “ sown unto you spiritual Things, is it a great
 “ Matter if we shall reap your worldly Things? Do
 “ ye not know that they who minister about Holy
 “ Things, live of the Sacrifice? And, they who
 “ wait at the Altar, are Partakers with the Altar?
 “ Even so hath the Lord also ordained, that they
 “ who preach the Gospel, should live of the Gospel.
 “ † Let him that is taught in the Word, minister
 “ unto

* 1 Cor. ix. 7, 11, 13, 14. † Gal. vi. 6.

“ unto him that teacheth in all good Things. This is the Gospel-Maintenance, the Church’s Duty to Ministers with Regard to Provision. A plentiful Subsistence for the *Priests* and *Levites* was expressly enjoyn’d by the *Mosaic* Law; and this Point is so often repeated and inculcated throughout the whole Old Testament, that it would require a *Volume* to recite all the Passages; tho’ Preaching did not begin in the *Jewish* Church till the Time of *Ezra* - - Yet all the Ministers belonging to the Temple had such an ample Allowance provided for ’em by God, that, according to the Computation of *Selden*, the whole Tythe amounted to near the 5th Part of the whole Revenue of the Land, besides Offerings, Sacrifices, &c. tho’ the Tribe of *Levi* was so small a Body of People, in Comparison of the rest, that it did not amount to the 49th Part, as may be seen, *Numb.* 1. 3. --- Whence it is evident, that those who then attended Divine Service, must needs be very rich. It is well known, that in the Primitive Times, the Clergy had a liberal Support out of the Offerings of the People: And, I am sure, they have still the same Right, where there is not a legal and stated Income. Nor were the very *Gentiles* wanting in this Respect, we may be sure, since *Joseph*, when he made *Pharoah* Proprietor of all *Egypt*, presum’d not to “ Buy the Land of the Priests. And since, at the Rise of the *Roman* Empire, the *Senators* and *Priests*, and all those who had the chief Inspection over the Affairs of Religion,

were

were chosen only out of the *Patricians*, or Nobility, can you doubt of their having a plentiful Maintenance? But, to return ---

ALL the *Priests* of our Church, Sir, are promiscuously invested, by Ordination, with Authority to preach the Gospel; and equally empower'd, I think, by the Gospel, to receive their Reward for so doing: But, such is the Happiness of Incumbents, (*absit Dicto Invidia*) that, as they are obliged by Law to preach, so are they also by Law enabled to recover their Recompence for it. Yet Incumbents are not obligated to preach above *once a Month*. The 45th *Canon* indeed directs "every benefic'd Man, allow'd to
" be a Preacher, to preach, if he thinks *fit*, one
" Sermon every Sunday in the Year, either at
" His own Church, or some Other -- But, * if a
" benefic'd Man is not allow'd to be a Preacher,
" he must get a Sermon *once a Month*, if his
" Living *can* pay for it. Yet, after all, no *Canons* enforce Ministers to preach so often as they do; and no Penalties are annexed to those which enjoin any Preaching.

So that the Office of Preaching, when the Government thinks *fit* to exert it self, is not appropriated to Livings, as appears from *Canon* 49th about *Licences*; from the Conduct of the Reigns of *H. VIII* *Edward VI*, *Queen Mary*, and *Queen Elizabeth*, when *such* Persons *only* were allow'd to Preach, whether they had Livings or not, (tho' this was

a most excessive Strain of Authority) as were *Licens'd* so to do.

RECTORS, therefore, may be silenc'd, Sir, and Curates, or Lecturers, appointed to preach in their Sted: For Legal-Predching seems to depend wholly upon a Licence from the Dioceſan; that is the *only* Human Title they *both* have for this Practice; and therefore, I conceive, that when a Rector is *Licens'd* to Preach in a Church, and a Lecturer alſo, they have an equal *Authority* for Preaching, tho' they have not for Payment. The Rector, indeed, may deny the Lecturer his Pulpit, as being his *Freehold*: A Common-Law Caſe, which can never be inſiſted on, by a ſpiritual Man, (when no flagrant Crime glares in the Lecturer) without Contempt and Deriſion, even from good Chriſtians: And, when the Rector has done, the Biſhop may alſo, if he pleaſes, ſilence Him too, and order a *Third* Perſon to ſupply *both* their Places: And all this with the utmoſt Equity; for if Clergymen can't agree, who ſhould? *Tantæne Animis Cœleſtibus Iræ*? They ſin againſt their Profeſſion, when they don't ſet a Pattern of Peace to their Followers!

So that Rectors, Lecturers, and Curates, if *Licens'd* to preach, have the ſame Right ſo to do, in Order to promote the Glory of God, and to edify the People: And, Sir, judge you whether they have not an equal Right to be paid! And, if ſo, I am pretty ſure, that thoſe who *give* Nothing to
Lecturers,

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Lecturers, would do just the *same* to their Parish-Priests, if they were at the *same* Liberty: For, as they are alike licens'd to preach in the *same* Churches, and, without Affront, alike do so, I can see no Gospel-Reason why they should not be alike paid.

BUT the Lecturers wave this Plea in Dference to our Laws; and only desire their Auditors to consider, that, if there were no such Laws, whether they wou'd be most liberal to the Incumbent, Curate, or Lecturer. But I forbear -- That the Labourer is worthy of his Hire, is plainly affirm'd -- Such Labourers Lecturers are, for the perfecting of the Saints, for the edifying of the Body of Christ: And therefore deserve their Hire; tho' they are not Hirelings any more than the Rectors. But, as the Incumbents have positive Laws on their Side, and are bound to Visit and take Care of the whole Parishes they belong to, 'tis but just and equitable, that they should have a much Better Income than the Lecturers, who are only to Preach on Sundays in the Afternoon. Yet they usually do other Offices, and without any other Advantage, than that of obliging the Ministers and Parishes.

THAT those who frequent the Church, and sit under the Ministry of Lecturers, Sir, are bound in Conscience and Decency to contribute, according to their several Stations and Abilities, to the Maintenance of their respective Lecturers,

is

is too clear to want any Proof --- *Res ipsa loquitur*. And, that those who slight all Places of Worship, and those who go to separate ones, ought to be Neighbourly in this *one* Case, which is left to their Free-Will, as well as in such Rates and Payments as they are forc'd to comply with, might be made appear: Because there are but *few* Families, God be thank'd, out of which *none* go to the Parish-Church; upon whose Account those who officiate in it ought to be encourag'd.

I remember the Learned Bishop *Gibson* mentions, in His *Codex*, *A Provision for Lecturers before the Restoration*, and quotes for it, 13, 14. *Car. II. Cap. 25. §. 1.* Which Statute sets forth, " That the Loyalists were constrained to settle " *Advowsons, Rectories, Glebes and Tythes*, to " the Uses assign'd by the Long-Parliament, as " Compositions for Delinquency, as they call'd " it, which was chiefly appropriated for the Maintenance of Preaching *Ministers* and *Lecturers*. --- The Act of *Exemption* likewise says, 1^{mo}. *Gul. & Mar.* " That Nothing therein contain'd, shall be construed to exempt any of the " Persons aforesaid from paying of Tythes, or other " Parochial Duties, or *any Other* Duties to the Church or Minister. --- I have recited the *Former* of these *Statutes*, to shew those who *differ* from us, what Care their Forefathers took to provide for Lecturers, tho' I wish they may never have *such* a Provision again: And the *Latter*, to remind 'em, that, tho' they are dispens'd with for
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not Going to Church, yet they are *not* from Pay-
ing all the Duties to the Church and Minister.

BUT Lecturers ought chiefly to be encourag'd out of a Sense of Religion, and of Love and Obedience to our Blessed Lord and Master, who commands his Disciples to propagate the Gospel, to drive away all erroneous and strange Doctrine, and all his Followers to contribute liberally and chearfully to such as undertake that difficult Employ -- So that those who *give* out of Personal Respect to the Preacher, or with any other Views than *these*; or *withdraw* their Subscriptions upon every little Omission of Ceremony, and the like; *give* upon false Principles, and so forfeit the Reward they might otherwise justly expect from their Saviour for complying with His Injunctions. Particular Likeings and Affections, Prejudices and Parties, should be overlook'd here; and the Mite which is cast into this Treasury, ought to be esteem'd, not as an Offering to *Men*, but unto the *Lord*, in Order to convert the Wicked, to confirm the good, to keep the Wolf from the Sheep, and to convince Gainsayers. And therefore I cannot but wonder how many Citizens and Christians, who are very Zealous in their *several* Ways, and like Lecturers mighty well, can satisfy their Consciences, in giving'em either Nothing at all, or *less* than they do to their *Common Watchmen*. The Case is far otherwise among those who *differ* from us; and I'm sorry their *Honour* should be our *Disgrace*.

IF you say, Sir, Lecturers cannot gather Tythes; that they have no legal Demands; and cannot *force* your Money out of your Pockets: Yet, pray, are they not Ministers of the Gospel? Do they not constantly preach it? Are they not chosen by you yourselves so to do? Are they not Shepherds, Messengers, Watchmen, Stewards? Does not their Education cost 'em as much Time, and Pains, and Expences, as *that* of the Incumbents? Do not their Sermons do *the same*? Then, surely, they have a Natural Right, as well as an Evangelical one, to your Oblations! If they have no Tythes, must they have no Offerings? If they cannot command a Maintenance by Law, are they entituled to None by the Gospel? If they cannot make you *pay*, as you ought, for their reasonable Service, are you not the more oblig'd to *give* it? Even Tythe of the Rent of Houses is not due of Common Right, tho' Acts of Parliament secure such Payment to the *London*-Clergy: But it was originally call'd an Offering, or Oblation, in Proportion to the Rent of Houses in the City of *London*; and afterwards Tythes, tho' 'tis not allow'd to be a Predial Tythe.

BUT this is a Task so Ungrateful to me, and generally, I thank God, so Unnecessary now, (such a Spirit of Generosity reigning among our Citizens, notwithstanding all the great Wrecks of Fortunes, all the dismal Calamities we at this Time labour under, and all the just Tears
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and Complainings in our Streets, which I hope the Almighty will soon avert, and turn into Songs of Joy and Thanksgiving,) that I am sure you will excuse my drawing the Curtain here, with only assuring you that I am,

DEAR SIR,

Your most Obedient,

Humble Servant, &c.





DEAR SIR,

Yours most Obedt. Servant

Thos. Sturt